**Foundations of College Writing – From Topic to Problem/Question**

Below are guidelines for changing an issue/event/person to a problem or question about which you can make an argument.

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| **Possible Topic** | **What Others Have Said** | **Problems/Questions** | **What I Can Add to the Conversation** |
| Example: *Taylor Swift* | Taylor Swift is a star because her music appeals to lots of different people  Taylor Swift is a star because of her looks and personality | Why is Taylor Swift so popular? What genre(s) does her music fit into? What are her musical influences?  What makes a person a celebrity? Is it a good thing or a bad thing that we judge celebrities based on their lives as well as their art? | History of her music career and what other musicians shaped it.  Analysis of her songs (music and lyrics) showing similarities/differences with country, rock, etc.  Identify qualities that make a person famous; show how Taylor exhibits these qualities  Evaluate celebrity qualities; argue for why certain ones are more or less important |
| Gun Control | Gun control should be more strict.  Gun control shouldn't be changed.  Gun control is to strict. | Why is gun control such a heated topic?  What are some arguments for gun rights and gun control? | Because of special interest groups, gun control has become a very political topic. Democrats traditionally advocate for stricter gun laws. Republicans are more split on the matter.  Different interpretations of the second amendment has sparked great debate over what our forefathers originally meant by the right to bear arms. |